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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to call attention to the need for offering a vital program of career development education during the formative years of schooling and to describe a practical schema for building such a program in elementary schools. Many elementary educators lack the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to make career education a concrete reality in local schools. To provide guidelines for educators in developing career education curriculums, a schema was devised and articulated by administrators and teachers who took part in two career development institutes sponsored by the University of Georgia during the summer of 1970. This schema arranged key questions, concepts, and procedures in a systematic framework for dissemination to elementary school faculties. The following seven major categories were proposed: (1) goals, (2) organizational elements, (3) student needs, (4) instructional units, (5) correlation patterns, (6) resource materials, and (7) evaluative criteria. As an instrument for involving local educators in an ongoing process of developing programs and units in career education, this proposed schema should guide them in constructing more relevant patterns of elementary schocling. (Author/AG)

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CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: A PRACTICAL SCHEMA

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> Education is in a transition state. Systems that have come down to us from past ages are found incapable of meeting the wants of the latter part of the nineteenth century. Especially is this the case in the way in which the young are taught how to work. Silently the old plan has passed away, and as yet no definite scheme has taken its place.
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> Richard T. Auchmuty, 1896

Career development for all youth is being recognized by many educators today as in 1896 as an inadequately developed area of public education. Educators maintain that orientation to and exploration of the world of work is an integrative thread which should be emphasized at every level of schooling. Moreover, it is imperative that this thread be incorporated into programs at the elementary school level because children need a concrete foundation for building bridges between present learnings acquired in connection with basic skill areas and future pathways of personal development.

Research[1] increasingly shows that the early concepts, attitudes, and skills acquired by a child are basic to and set the pace for his later educational development. In light of this, it follows that career development having to do with an introductory knowledge of and appreciation for the world of work can not be neglected by elementary educators. Hence, the purpose of this paper is (1) to call attention to the need for offering a vital program of career development education (CDE) during the formative years of schooling and (2) to describe a practical schema for building such a program in elementary schools.

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NEED FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Since a major goal of education is to prepare youth to function as productive citizens in modern society, it would be expected that career development for all youth would be assigned high priority at all levels of schooling. When elementary schools are evaluated,[2] however, it is generally found that they include much guidance and instruction for pupils preparing to go to college, and almost none for pupils planning to seek gainful employment either at age 16 or after high school graduation. Sequential programs of CDE for terminal youth are practically nonexistent. Consequently, it is found that the young rarely develop an adequate understanding of the producer and consumer dimensions of modern social life; and they generally lack the dispositions needed to derive a sense of personal satisfaction and worth from engaging in different kinds of productive work situations.

Elementary educators, in particular, need help in relation to building career development programs and units for three main reasons. First, CDE, like space exploration, is a recent area of concern; hence many elementary educators have no more than a surface knowledge of this responsibility. Second, they are more sensitive and willing to support changes related to improving programs for the college bound than to instituting new functional programs for youth with terminal education goals. Third, they have been prepared in their preservice programs to operate as academic generalists and often receive little preparation for functioning effectively in such areas as career development. Consequently, many elementary educators lack the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to make CDE a concrete reality in local schools.

SCHEMA FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The traditional notion of treating vocational education merely as a depository for non-college bound youth is gradually giving way to a perspective which holds public schools responsible for the career development of all youth. Within this perspective CDE in the elementary school is exploratory, orientational, and preparatory rather than concerned with training for a particular occupational category. It expands the child's awareness about the nature of career choices other than college, but does not force him to make any firm decision about what he will do as an adult. In short, CDE purposes to initiate the young in certain processes of personal inquiry which will be continually useful in his quest for productive citizenship.

Many questions are being raised by those confronted with the task of introducing career development programs into the elementary schools. A number of these questions were posed by administrators and teachers who took part in two career development institutes[3] sponsored by the University of Georgia during the summer of 1970. These questions along with certain developmental concepts and procedures serve as the basis for the schema to be described below. In discussion following the institutes, it became apparent that the questions, concepts, and procedures had to be arranged in some kind of systematic framework for dissemination to elementary school faculties.

In view of this realization, the following schema was devised and articulated. The schema proposes the establishment of seven major categories which are as follows: (1) goals, (2) organizational elements, (3) student needs, (4) instructional units, (5) correlation patterns,

(6) resource materials, and (7) evaluative criteria. Since each category indicates an area of investigative study it begins with a key question for faculty consideration. Some background for each question is then presented along with certain concepts and procedures that identify potential directions for making a start in developing a program of career development in an elementary school. Thus, the following categories are clarified as a guide to educators for development of this new area of the elementary curriculum.

Goals

What are the goals of career development education? This immediately calls for identification of some purposes to be achieved through career development education. It entails a clarification of benefits elementary children should derive from such a program and makes explicit the differences between this program and that normally found in vocational education.

In reviewing the literature on CDE one finds statements which identify both general and specific goals. For example, Laws cites the following general goals as purposes for a program of career guidance in the elementary school: (1) Broaden the occupational horizons of the elementary school child. (2) Establish positive attitudes toward work. (3) Remove stereotyped presentations of occupations commonly found in elementary textbooks. (4) Provide a basis for later vocational exploration and decision making.[4] Bottoms, on the other hand, supplies us with a set of more specific goals which are differentiated in terms of the following dimensions: (1) Self-characteristics, (2) Occupational areas, (3) Educational avenues, (4) Decision-making, (5) Economic and social values of work, and (6) Psy-

chological and sociological meaning of work.[5]

Goals such as these can be adopted by local schools or a school can generate its own set. The important point is that some set of goals identify the major types of pupil growth to be fostered by the evolving program of career development.

Organizational Elements

What organizational elements are to be used as a basis for building comprehensive and integrative programs of instruction in the area of career development? Behind this question are concerns about whether career development would go beyond the secondary school's present emphasis in home economics, business education, industrial arts, and agriculture and whether the sequencing of instruction would merely represent a downward extension of activities associated with these areas. This paper recommends the cluster or families of occupations approach as a means for building systematic programs of CDE in the elementary school.

This approach involves using broad areas of occupational activities as the basis for defining the scope of CDE. These areas of activity can also serve as a core foundation for developing progressive sequences of related instructional units. One example of the cluster approach is found in the Gary, Indiana Career Areas Program which contains the following organizational threads: (1) Building construction and maintenance, (2) Business and commerce, (3) Communications, (4) Extractive industries, (5) Health and personal services, (6) Marine trades, (7) Mechanics and metal working, (8) Protective services, (9) Technology, and (10) Textiles and leather.[6] Additional cluster approaches have been developed by Detroit, Michigan (Galaxies), Quincy, Massachusetts (Job Families), and the Georgia

State Department of Education (Occupational Clusters).

Student Needs

How can we identify the needs of students in relation to career development? Behind this question is a concern about how elementary teachers are to move from the general goals and organizational elements mentioned above to the specific needs and interests of individual pupils. One approach is the use of an interest inventory on "What would you like to learn". This would include items such as (1) How to draw cartoons and comic strips, (2) How to fly an airplane, (3) What a policeman does, and (4) What a forest ranger does. Pupils can also be asked to respond orally or in writing to an open ended question such as - What would you like to do after you finish school? A comparison of job opportunities in the local community with those in another community is a further means of assisting the individual in identifying his needs and interests.

It should be recognized that the interests and hence the needs of elementary youth change quite frequently. As long as the program is treated as orientational and exploratory these changes do not represent any serious problem, however. In fact, they can be used as points of departure for expanding the areas of potential development, and hence be beneficial rather than problematic.

Instructional Units

How are instructional units in CDE to be formulated and what would they look like? Behind this question are concerns about who would construct

the units and the form and content to be incorporated into the units. The units should be developed by representatives of a local school faculty with the assistance of appropriate resource personnel either as part of the continuous revision of curriculum or as part of a special project workshop. The Center for Curriculum Improvement and Staff Development (CCISD) at the University of Georgia sponsored a special project institute in which teachers used the Gary, Indiana Career Areas plan to construct some units for the following areas: (1) Business, (2) Building, (3) Communications, (4) Protective Services, and (5) Transportation. Excerpts from a sample of one unit is presented to indicate a type of content and form that can be employed in building a career development unit.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES UNIT[7]

Introduction

The unit, Protective Services, is designed for sixth grade students. It should acquaint students with various career opportunities in the area of protective services.

Some Behavioral Objectives

The student will be able to (1) Identify several occupations in the protective services area and list some duties of each. (2) State reasons why the area of protective services is important to society. (3) List areas of study which are offered in school helpful to one planning to enter the protective services area. (4) List reasons people in the protective services area give for liking their jobs.

Some Activities

Learning activities identified for the unit will be divided into groups appropriate for several consecutive sessions. For the first session students will read suggested material and make written reports on either law enforcement, fire fighting, or other service type careers. A city policeman and a state patrolman will explain their duties, training necessary for their jobs, salary range, and what contribution they make to society.

The second session will include viewing films on the F.B.I., the Secret Service,and the Treasury Department. The films will include information on duties, training, and salary range. After viewing the films, students working in small groups will compile reasons for having national law enforcement agencies and list contributions these agencies make toward society. Each group will share his list with other groups. A composite list will be prepared for display.

The third session will be a tour of the local fire station where the fire chief will explain the fireman's duties, training,and salary range. Students will develop written lists about why firemen are important to us. Other sessions will explore additional service areas and utilize different approaches and learning techniques.

During the unit study the students will watch shows on television which deal with a protective services area and write a report about how realistic they seemed compared to what they had learned.

Pre and Post-Assessment Tests

Pre and post-assessment tests will be administered. These tests will check knowledge such as (1) Name six different occupations to be found in the protective services area. (2) Give two reasons why

policemen are important to society. (3) Name two skills a policeman or a state patrolman should have to do his job well. (4) List two important responsibilities of firemen.

Student attitudes will be determined through a check which indicates how students feel about certain statements. The student will indicate the degree of agreement with items such as (1) Policemen are usually friendly to non-law breakers. (2) Firemen are courageous. (3) I would like to work for the F.B.I. (4) The State Patrol helps us by making our highways safer.

Obviously, the above elements are suggestive. However, they do identify means by which teachers and students can make a detailed study of one area of critical employment in contemporary society.

Correlation Patterns

Is CDE to be treated as a separate area in the curriculum or can it be correlated with the present curriculum? Behind this question is a concern about the problem of adding another area to the already overcrowded school day. The interdisciplinary approach to education which is associated with efforts to humanize the curriculum offers a means for inclusion of CDE in the elementary school. Data relating to the goals of CDE and the needs of pupils can be used to construct units for incorporation as lead or subtopics in various areas of academic study. For example, units on protective services and transportation can easily be related to a social studies treatment of community development. Units on communications and personal services can be tied in with a language arts study of effective use of language. Units on business and building can be related to mathematical studies of measurement. Units on mechanics and technology can be tied in with the scientific study of relationship

of matter and energy. With careful planning, appropriate units can be constructed for correlating various areas of career development education within the present program of elementary curriculum offerings.

Resource Materials

What resource materials are needed in order to build an adequate program of CDE? Behind this question is the concern about what material aids exist or can be developed to implement CDE. An extensive bibliography of selected resources organized in terms of occupational clusters is a first essential. A file of the names of persons who would share information on the various occupations in the community is desirable. Survey reports on services and vocational opportunities in the local community are also necessary. A wide variety of commerically prepared career materials should be available.

In respect to the first essential, Chipley and Chipley have prepared a bibliography of printed materials, films and filmstrips organized in terms of the Cary Indiana occupational cluster areas.[8] Files on human resources and survey reports on local occupations should be compiled by each local school. Many commercial materials such as SRA's Our Working World Social Studies series and the Joint Council on Economic Education's "The Child's World of Choices" series should be a vital part of the resources readily accessible through the media center in each school.

Evaluative Criteria

What evaluative criteria are to be used to assess career development efforts in the elementary school? This question was prompted to a large extent by the current movements in educational accountability. Educators can approach the evaluation of career development efforts both at the schoolwide and classroom levels of operation. At the schoolwide level,

educators can apply general criteria such as (1) Does the school's statement of objectives contain some specifics related to important career development goals? (2) Does the school have a plan of organization which specifies distinctive units to be offered as parts of a sequential program of instruction? (3) Does the school's media center contain the materials and resources needed to develop comprehensive units at several levels of instruction? (4) Does the school have an evaluation plan for assessing pupil development at various grade levels? A more comprehensive list of general criteria for assessing innovative programs can be found in other works such as Nongradedness in Georgia Schools.[9]

At the classroom level, it is desirable for teachers in each level to have some specific instruments and procedures for assessing pupil gains in knowledge, attitudes, and skills for different instructional units. It is also desirable that these assessment procedures be utilized in a pre and post-assessment pattern of evaluative study. Since these instruments do not exist for the most part at the present time, they remain to be developed in connection with an ongoing process of implementing and testing local classroom units of instruction. A few samples of prospective instruments are available, however, as part of the aforementioned units developed by teachers for inclusion in materials to be disseminated by the OCICD.

The above seven categories make up a practical schema which can be used by local faculties to develop a systematic program of CDE for elementary pupils. The schema is comprehensive in the sense that it includes categories ranging from goal identification to evaluative assessment and specifies some options for initiating activities under each category. The schema is integrative in the sense that it identifies ways for relating the various categories to existing school needs and programs and specifies devel-

opmental concepts which can be built upon to relate them to later levels of schooling.

SUMMARY

In modern society it is evident that the world of work is rapidly changing. Thus, it is imperative that schools change their ways of preparing youth for productive membership in society. In this paper we have shown the need for Career Development Education and proposed a schema for building such a systematic program for elementary school youth. The schema is offered as an instrument for involving local educators in an ongoing process of developing programs and units in career education. Hopefully, it will guide them in constructing more relevant patterns of elementary schooling which can provide vital career education opportunities for all youth.

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